

8th February 1924]

Education (Primary).

Amending Bill to the Compulsory Education Act.

11-15 a.m. 307 Q.—Mr. A. V. BHANOJI RAO: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government and the hon. the Minister for Education be pleased to state—

(a) whether he is likely to introduce an amending Bill to the Madras Elementary Education Act;

(b) if so, when;

(c) whether the Cocanada Municipal Council attempted to make a beginning with the introduction of free and compulsory primary education without additional taxation but by means of an equitable adjustment of property and professional taxes, and whether it is a fact that the scheme was dis-
countenanced in the Local Self-Government Department, and, if so, on what grounds;

(d) the progress made in the introduction of vocational education in schools and the measures he is likely to adopt to render the progress real and substantial; and

(e) in what stage the proposal to establish the Andhra University is and what the measures are which he is going to adopt for the speedy introduction of the University Bill?

A.—(a) Yes.

(b) As early as possible.

(c) The Council proposed to introduce free and compulsory elementary education in some of the wards of the Municipality and to meet the additional cost involved in the scheme by appropriating for the purpose $\frac{1}{4}$ of the property tax and $\frac{1}{8}$ of the tax on companies and of the profession tax after raising the last-mentioned tax from $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the maximum rates. The proposal to appropriate a portion of the property tax for the purpose amounted to a reduction of tax under the District Municipalities Act for which the sanction of Government was necessary under section 78 of that Act. It was vetoed by Government as they considered that the additional cost involved in the scheme of compulsion should be met by the levy of an education tax under the Elementary Education Act which should be in addition to the existing taxes under the Madras District Municipalities Act. Otherwise, the Government would be paying a contribution equal to the proceeds of the tax, while the Council continued merely to maintain the existing rates of taxation.

(d) Provision for vocational education in such subjects as carpentry, weaving, mechanical drawing and metal work has been made in a large number of schools at a recurring cost to Government of about Rs. 60,000 *per annum* and schemes relating to the introduction of such education in other schools are under consideration. The officers of the department have been instructed to keep a close watch on the initiation and working of vocational schemes.

(e) The matter is under consideration.

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Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—“ May I know from the hon. the Minister for Education, in view of his answer to clause (c) of this question whether it is the policy of the Government to sanction the introduction of free and compulsory elementary education in Municipal areas only when the Municipal councils are willing to increase the existing rates of taxation ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ The Government are only applying to those municipalities the provisions of the Elementary Education Act.”

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—“ Is it not open to the Government, under the Act, even if the Municipalities do not raise the education cess but find money otherwise, to sanction those proposals ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ The legal adviser of the Government has expressed himself against the view held by the hon. Member.”

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—“ Will the Government, in view of the difficulties of the situation, be pleased to take steps to have the Elementary Education Act amended in order that elementary education be more easily spread, if that is the object of the Government ? I presume that is their object, ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ Difficulty is not experienced. But the question is under consideration.”

Rao Bahadur A. S. KRISHNA RAO PANTULU :—“ Is it not a fact that for the purpose of amending the Madras Elementary Education Act proposals were called for from the District Educational Councils and received so long ago as in 1922, and that hon. the Minister for Education then stated that an amending Bill would shortly be introduced ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ The answer is in the affirmative.”

Rao Bahadur A. S. KRISHNA RAO PANTULU :—“ If so, may I know from the hon. the Minister why there has been a delay of more than one and a half years for the introduction of this Bill and what steps have been taken since then ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ Steps have been taken to collect information from the different bodies interested in the expansion of elementary education and a special officer was placed on duty to consolidate all the information and to make a clear statement as to the policy to be adopted. Amendments have been taken on hand and it will take some time before all the amendments are consolidated and fully considered.”

Rao Bahadur A. S. KRISHNA RAO PANTULU :—“ Has it not been found possible to appoint an officer of the Education Department to undertake this task and to frame a policy for the expansion of elementary education ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ The officer that was appointed was mostly responsible for preparing and framing the last Elementary Education Act and Government wanted to utilize the services of one who was fully conversant with all the attendant circumstances in preparing that Act.”

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Rao Bahadur A. S. KRISHNA RAO PANTULU :—“ Therefore, may I know from the hon. the Minister whether it was at his instance that Mr. Moir was appointed as special officer for the purpose ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ It cannot be otherwise.”

Rao Bahadur A. S. KRISHNA RAO PANTULU :—“ With regard to clause (d) regarding the introduction of vocational education, may I know whether the hon. Minister has taken steps to secure more funds for this purpose this year ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ The administrative department have applied for more grants to the Finance Department with regard to vocational education. The matter is under the consideration of the Finance Department and the Finance Committee.”

Mr. A. RAMASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—“ May I know if the Retrenchment Committee has advised against vocational education ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ I am sorry to say that the last Finance Committee which was also the Retrenchment Committee recommended against vocational education.”

Rao Bahadur A. S. KRISHNA RAO PANTULU :—“ As regards clause (e) may I know what steps the hon. the Minister has taken to give effect to the proposals made at the meeting held at Vizagapatam in November 1922 for the purpose of creating an Andhra University ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ Those proposals were placed before the Finance Committee and the Finance Committee said that the provincial finances were not in a position to meet the expenditure for a new University and therefore the matter is kept in abeyance. As far as the administrative department is concerned, a Bill is under preparation for the purpose.”

Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN :—“ May I ask the hon. the Minister whether any specific proposal for the creation of an Andhra University was placed before the Finance Committee ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ A specific, definite and clear scheme was prepared and placed before the Finance Committee.”

Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN :—“ It is a matter of opinion.”

Mr. YAHYA ALI SAHIB :—“ May I know, Sir, whether legislation regarding the University is not a Central subject ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ I will refer my hon. Friend to the rules on Provincial subjects published in the *Fort St. George Gazette*.”

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—“ May I ask the hon. the Minister to tell me for what purpose is vocational education introduced in secondary high school classes ? Is it to train the students as carpenters, weavers, etc., or is it only to give a training to the hand ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ I want notice of that question ” (laughter).